

Surara
Pakidai

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301 171 This ancient Karaibén /Carib/ custom, which already caught the eye of the early discoverers as something unusual, is also familiar to the Surára and Pakidái, but is regarded by them as very ugly and thus not copied; for the women and girls among these Indians the leg cords are always loose.

301 d) Neck cords and chains of primitive material

789 It is not ornamentation, but magic that is connected with the neck cords and chains of primitive material.

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Thus, young men sometimes wear around their necks an urucú-colored, two-strand curauá-fiber cord twisted to the right, to which is fastened a small piece of the root of the tajá (Colocasia antiquorum and Xanthosoma violaceum Schott) -- hanrë. Love magic is involved here (see p. 242). In order to ward it off, married female members of the tribe use two kinds of neck chains. On their urucú-colored cord of curauá fibers, young women tie numerous small pieces of the root of the tajá -- hanrë -- and older ones small bits of the camarau (Cipó sp.) -- hif -- (see p. 243).

302 e) Hair style

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Men, women, and children, after the third year of life, have the same hair style -- mabéu -- cut evenly all around the head, including the tonsure -- hemóno. Shaving the latter, but also cutting the hair are duties of the women, for which they use a piece of reed split and sharpened on one side (taquara -- Guadua sp. --) (see p. 119). At festivals, on the occasion of magical acts, and during war expeditions the tonsure is painted with urucú.

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According to statements by my informants, it primarily represents a marking which, for the stick duels that the men occasionally carry out, distinguishes the safest and most resistant part of the head (205). This also explains the scars which one

205. Becher, 1959, p. 165.

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sees on the tonsures of almost all the men. They are also present, however, in the case of female members of the tribe, for if a

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Métraux also documents for the Chiriguano (541).

541. Métraux, 1931, p. 154, footnote 1.

It should also be pointed out that the hunting rule so strictly observed by the Surara and Pakidai men, which says that a hunter may never carry his game into the maloka himself, can probably be traced back to Karaiben /Carib/ influences. In this connection Zerries speaks of propitiatory rites relating to the killed animal (542). According to his investigations, the

542. Zerries, 1954a, p. 359.

northern region of South America emerges as the nuclear area, where they are found primarily among Karaiben tribes of the Venezuelan coast and its hinterland (543). The author cites

543. Zerries, 1954a, pp. 136/37,
359/60.

Roth (544) and Crévaux (545) as the most important sources, as

544. Roth, 1915, p. 294.

545. Crévaux, 1883, p. 283.

well as the very old report by Rochefort (546), which shows that

546. Rochefort, 1658, p. 451.

even the Island Karaiben were acquainted with this custom.

● 832 c) Love magic:

[824] For the purpose of love magic, young men sometimes wear a cunua-fiber string around the neck, to which is fastened a small piece of the root of the tajá (Colocasia antiquorum and Xanthosoma violaceum Schott) -- hainé -- (see p. 83). If the

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- 832 wearer bites on it and holds it under the nose of a girl or a woman, he gains her favor through the fragrances emanating from it. In fact, I was told that love will then be so great that the woman or the girl would follow him everywhere (547).

547. This type of love magic is reminiscent of a myth of the Aruak /Arawak/ Manao: The Aromatic Root. (Baldus, 1958, pages 32 ff.)

In order to protect themselves from this love magic, married women use two kinds of neck chains. Younger ones [824] have tied to their string of curauá fibers numerous small pieces of tajá root, and older ones, small pieces of the camarau liana (Cipó sp.) -- hif -- (see p. 83). These many pieces of root or liana then counteract the effect of the young men's single piece of root.

754 If a man is angry at a woman because she does not give him a hearing, he can avenge himself in the following manner:

[824] On a rainy day he tears off a leaf of the pupunha palm (Guilielma speciosa Mart.) and goes with it into the forest. When he reaches a matamatá tree (Eschweilera matamata Hub.) from which /112/ drops are falling, he lays the palm leaf under the tree. He leaves it there until it has rotted. Out of it comes a worm which the man later fetches and then roasts. If he throws this upon the sleeping woman, she will have no more children.

789 d) Rain magic:

821 Although the Surára and Pakidái appreciate rain more than too strong a radiation from the sun (548), there are occasions when

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548. In contrast to this, I should like to point out that among the Taulipang, for example, there is great fear of rain (Koch-Grünberg, 1916, pp. 130/31).

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771 gesture adequately expresses. The point is that the primitive has not yet clarified
789 his ideas on the exact relationship between cause and effect, between the wish
and its realization—which is to say, between will and reality, subjective and
objective. Another clear proof of this lies in the attitude towards pregnancy and
childbirth, which we had already noticed among Uarema's people.

789 Even the belief in amulets is one aspect of the complete naturalness of the
831 supernatural! Shirian amulets are made from the dust of a dried leaf or piece of
wood, wrapped into a tiny parcel inside a banana leaf, and tied round the arm.

• [832] Some of these have the power to attract love, if not quite in the same sense as
the love philtres of Medieval Europe. It should be borne in mind that what we
call love—for us, the cultural refinement of a physical attraction—does not
exist for the Indians. For them, nothing is involved but the physiological rela-
tionship, together with the satisfaction of fulfilling an individual need, a sharing
of erotic excitement and as a result, the future increase of their stock. Thus the
phenomenon of 'falling in love' is not present: it is simply the taking of a man,
or a woman. There is no courtship, only the act itself. In the light of this it
becomes clear that what the Indian hopes for from the amulet is not success in
wooing a man or a woman already known and selected, but a happy outcome
of all things sexual, upon which so much depends—the woman, the family
and the continuance of his race.

789 The amulet is not a 'charm' such as we imagine it: it consists simply of a
757 substance which possesses the required power by virtue of its own nature—not
by virtue of our belief in it—in exactly the same way as some vegetable extracts
have the power to produce diarrhoea, and others the power to stop it. As a cure
for diarrhoea the Indians take something prepared from a liana, which puts a
stop to the trouble and restores the system to its normal state. The virtue of this
substance and the way in which it acts is no more and no less occult than in the
case of the amulet worn to attract success in love. The curative pill disappears
into the mouth and its effects are felt elsewhere. The relation between the two
regions is no more and no less mysterious than in the case of the love amulet:
the human body is just as real, just as complex and just as unknown as the ex-
ternal world and other human beings.

756 The medicine-man is to be found in all Shirian tribes. He is the witch-doctor
793 and the physician for all general purposes. His superior is the *lahalla*, a kind of
high priest, and a very, very rare bird, who possesses wonder-working powers
of an unheard-of degree of effectiveness. Uarema assured me that the *lahalla* at

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- 832 They believe that another substance is effective against women, especially if it is thrown at them. They use it to frighten them, and it also forms a part of the ceremony in which a man shows his preference for a woman whom he wishes to make his wife.

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753 There is a taboo with respect to the burning of cloth or paper. The burning of cloth or paper, according to what they believe; causes sickness and /482/ perhaps death. The Gwaika do not dare to do it "against an enemy," since they are afraid that they might die also.

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715 Men cannot see a "bole" -- the spirit or soul of a dead person which has returned -- but women can see them on occasion, and, when they do, it is almost certain that the "bole" will make them sick. The "bole" has two eyes like embers, a cold skin, and in general has human forms. It customarily passes by way of the paths, especially at night, and frequently returns to abandoned settlements. They can talk and shout like a man; and many strange noises which are heard in the woods are attributed to the nearness of a "bole." The fall of a tree by itself is also attributed to a "bole."

[781] Once a woman told us about her encounter with a "bole." She had been awakened by something which touched her and hit her in the ribs. When she woke up, a voice said to her: "There are enemies outside." She became very frightened and did not go back to sleep for the rest of the night.

The mere presence of a "bole" is considered sufficient to cause an acute pain in some part of the body.

Frequently we were asked by the Indians if there were "boles" the night before in the surroundings.

It is believed that the "boles" travel alone in open country. Thus, they assume that a few palm leaves obstructing the entrance to the path are usually sufficient to block their way. It is also believed that fire is an effective weapon against the "boles" whereas an arrow would be useless.

751 There is a belief that a certain seed is efficacious for keeping danger away from the children. They string these seeds as if they were beads and hang them around the child's neck.

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Another important cultivated plant is tobacco. Since men, women, and children all chew tobacco, the patch of ground devoted to its cultivation is quite large. Each family grows its own supply and jealously guards it. It is one of the most commonly stolen crops and, therefore, frequently has a conspicuous stick fence around it to draw the thief's attention to the fact that its owner shows a strong concern for its welfare. A man will even put a fence between his own tobacco and that of his father, should the two crops be planted side by side, and neither man can take a plant belonging to the other without permission. I also saw a young man place a number of sharpened bones in the ground near his tobacco patch so that a thief might suffer a serious foot wound should he trespass.

Cotton is the last plant to which major significance can be attached. The fibers are separated by hand from the seeds and spun into thread with a stick whorl, then several threads are twisted into a thick yarn. The yarn is rolled into balls about the size of a grapefruit and stored until enough has been accumulated to make a hammock. Frequently the balls of yarn are traded to the members of other villages.

The hammocks are manufactured on a crude frame consisting of two upright poles located about 6 feet from each other. The yarn is wrapped around and around the two poles until the desired width of the hammock is reached, usually about a yard, perhaps a little more. About a dozen vertical seams are braided into the horizontal strands of yarn; the poles are removed after the ends of the hammock have been tied with a few strands of cotton string, and the new hammock is completed (see Fig. 2-7). The women also use the yarn to make a short waistband, armband, and halter, and the men use it to make fat, round belts. All ages and sexes use it as a wrist, ankle, knee, and chest cord, and the men make a waist cord of the string, to which they tie their penis foreskins.

Numerous other plants are cultivated in the gardens, but are not as significant in everyday life as those discussed. They include leaf fibers, *bixa* pigment, avocados, drugs, water gourds and gourds for making spoons and ladles, a kind of squash whose seeds are eaten and whose yellow flowers are used by the young girls as decorations, sugar cane, cashew trees, papaya fruit, hot peppers, and a host of magical plants.

Most of the magical plants are associated with benevolent or at least nonmischievous functions. "Female charms" (*isa bāri*), for example, are used by men to make women more receptive to sexual advances. The dried leaves of the magical plant are mixed with a fragrant wood, and the resulting powder is said to be able to make a reluctant female hungry for sex. Most men carry a small packet of this at all times. The powder is held in the palm of the hand, which is then held firmly against the nose of the female: She is forced to breathe it into her lungs. After she has done this, she becomes very receptive, and can thereafter be easily seduced by the man who charmed her. Another magical plant is cultivated by the women. Its leaves are thrown on the men when they have club fights because it allegedly keeps their tempers under control and prevents the fight from escalating to shooting. Still other plants are cultivated to insure that male or female children grow up to be healthy adults, a different plant being associated with each sex.

Some of the plants are cultivated for malevolent purposes, such as causing the women in enemy villages to have miscarriages or pains in the back when they are preg-